

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A motion-preserving implant device comprising:
a first plate comprising an outer surface for engaging with a first bone and an inner surface including both a plurality of first recessed surfaces and a concave articulation surface, the plurality of first recessed surfaces spaced outwardly apart from the concave articulation surface in a circumscribing relationship therewith;
a second plate for engaging with a second bone, the second plate comprising a plurality of second recessed surfaces;
a convex articulation member positioned entirely between the two plates and in direct and slidable contact with the concave articulation surface;
a plurality of spaced motion-controlling members each extending between an opposing pair of the first and second recessed surfaces, wherein the articulation member is separate from and stiffer than the motion-controlling members; and
an elongated member connected to and joining the plurality of motion-controlling members, the elongated member extending between adjacent motion controlling members in a manner that maintains the spacing of the spaced motion controlling members.
2. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 wherein the motion-controlling members are configured to constrain the relative motion between the two plates.
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 wherein the motion-controlling members are formed from an elastic material.

5. (Currently amended) A spinal implant for insertion between two vertebral bodies, comprising:

a first plate comprising an outer surface for engaging with the first vertebral body and an inner surface including both a plurality of first recessed surfaces and a concave articulation surface, the first recessed surfaces adjacent to and outwardly circumscribing the concave articulation surface;

a second plate for engaging with the second vertebral body, the second plate comprising a plurality of second recessed surfaces aligned with and facing the plurality of first recessed surfaces;

an articulation member made from a first material and positioned in direct and articulating engagement with the concave articulation surface and entirely between the two plates;

a plurality of spaced elastic motion-controlling members made from a second material, each motion-controlling member extending between an opposing pair of the first and second recessed surfaces, the second material being more elastic than the first material; and

an elongated member connected to and joining the plurality of motion-controlling members, the elongated member extending between adjacent motion controlling members in a manner that maintains the spacing of the spaced motion controlling members.

6. (Previously Presented) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein the articulation member and the motion-controlling members are configured to provide pivotal and rotational movement between the two vertebral bodies.

7. (Original) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein the articulation member is configured to provide rotational and translational movement between the two vertebral bodies.

8. (Original) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein the articulation member is a non-elastic ball and socket.

9. (Original) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein the plates are coated with an amorphous oxide coating.

10. (Original) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein the articulation member includes a projection having a convex shape.

11. (Cancelled)

12.-13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously Presented) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein at least one of the elastic members is constructed of a bio-resorbable material.

15. (Previously Presented) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein at least one of the elastic members is constructed of a material that changes properties in response to its environment.

16. (Previously Presented) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein at least one of the elastic members is constructed of a material that changes properties in response to an external stimulus.

17. (Previously Presented) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein at least one of the elastic members includes a hollow portion.

18. (Previously Presented) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein at least one of the elastic members is filled with a gel.

19. (Previously Presented) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein at least one of the elastic members is shaped as a wheel.

20. (Previously Presented) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein at least one of the elastic members is shaped as a sphere.

21.-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently amended) An implant comprising:

a first plate for engaging with a first bone comprising a superior surface and an inferior surface, the superior surface having both a plurality of recessed surface portions and a convex articulation surface portion, the recessed surface portions adjacent to and outwardly circumscribing the convex articulation surface portion;

a second plate for engaging with a second bone comprising a superior surface and an inferior surface, the inferior surface having a concave articulation surface portion in direct contact and articulating engagement with the convex articulation surface portion;

a plurality of spaced motion-controlling members, separate from the convex articulation surface portion, extending between the recessed surface portions and the inferior surface of the second plate; and

an elongated member connected to and joining the motion-controlling members, the elongated member extending between adjacent motion controlling members in a manner that maintains the spacing of the spaced motion controlling members.

28. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 27 wherein:
the elongated member is of a flexible material.

29. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 27 wherein:
the elongated member extends through the plurality of motion-controlling members.

30. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 wherein:
the elongated member is of a flexible material.

31. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 wherein:
the elongated member extends through the plurality of motion-controlling members.

32. (Previously Presented) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein:
the elongated member is of a flexible material.

33. (Previously Presented) The spinal implant of claim 5 wherein:
the elongated member extends through the plurality of motion-controlling members.

34. (Currently amended) A motion-preserving implant device comprising:
a first plate member;
a second plate member disposed in a spaced apart, facing and generally parallel relationship with the first plate member;
an articulation member centrally disposed between the first and second plate members;
and
a plurality of spaced motion controlling members disposed between the first and second plate members, outwardly circumscribing the articulation member, and being strung together, necklace-like, by an elongated joining member, the articulation member being stiffer than the motion controlling members, the elongated joining member extending between adjacent motion controlling members in a manner that maintains the spacing of the spaced motion controlling members.

35. (New) A motion-preserving implant device comprising:
a first plate comprising an outer surface for engaging with a first bone and an inner surface including both a plurality of first recessed surfaces and a concave articulation surface, the plurality of first recessed surfaces spaced outwardly apart from the concave articulation surface in a circumscribing relationship therewith;
a second plate for engaging with a second bone, the second plate comprising a plurality of second recessed surfaces;
a convex articulation member positioned entirely between the two plates and in direct and slidable contact with the concave articulation surface;
a plurality of motion-controlling members each extending between an opposing pair of the first and second recessed surfaces, the motion-controlling members being distributed substantially on three sides of the convex articulation member, a fourth side being devoid of motion-controlling members such that the motion controlling members are non-symmetrically distributed about the convex articulation member; and

an elongated member connected to and joining the plurality of motion-controlling members.

36. (New) The motion-preserving implant device of claim 35, wherein the elongated member and the motion controlling members form a complete ring about the convex articulation member.